

**Session M2B – Destination Branding****Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> – 12:15 – 13:45****M2B2 – Mining and chamber music: Terra Nova, exploring new territory in the development of music-tourism networks**

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**Purpose**

To explore music tourism networks. This article traces the development of three music festivals and looks at the way in which management use weak ties to develop an innovative and diverse festival program which helps them attract and retain sponsors and develop new audiences.

**Methodology**

Qualitative, case-based, exploratory research

**Findings**

The study suggests that festivals that are enmeshed in dense networks with weak ties are more innovative and more adaptable to change than those with a sparser network. The importance of weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) for innovation is illustrated here, together with the importance of weak, lasting ties that help retain the support of the local community without whom the event would not function. Weak ties connect the artistic director with people from a different world, such as mining, food, marine science, sport and tourism, and that leads to the requisite variety in festival programming.

**Research limitations**

Limited number of interviews conducted, inability to generalise.

**Practical implications**

The general conclusion for event managers is that they need to engage in network building activity in order to obtain resources and grow the event. The cultivation of weak ties, in other words, links with non-artistic people and unusual connections to local industry, lead to novel festival programs.

**Originality/value of the paper**

To date there has been little analysis of tourism from a social network perspective. This paper contributes to a key debate in the literature on networks, notably the density/sparseness of networks and strength/weakness of ties thesis (Granovetter, 1973)

**Keywords**

Networks, music tourism, event management, weak ties

**Type of paper**

Case study